7:Padden H-4 (no date) 1957 SG4 Araucanians SG4

Spanish, the rebels kept themselves fully informed of all Spanish activity. Never lacking information, the Indians always had a precise idea of Spanish strength or weakness. There was seldom a rigid military perimeter; in those areas where the invader could maintain a fort and military supremacy the Indians were reduced to servitude. With a weakening of Spanish strength, rebellion inevitably occurred, so that the distinction as a peaceful or warlike Indian depended largely upon the state of affairs of the moment. Because the Indians so frequently changed roles, they were never out of personal contact with the Spanish.

The Indians received some aid and encouragement from Spanish deserters. There is no telling how many deserted to enemy ranks in the course of the sixteenth century, but in the year 1600 alone it is known that there were over sixty desertions.[14] A good many of these renegades were still living among the Indians in 1607.[15] In fear of peace and subsequent retribution, the traitors taught the Indians many things that would have been difficult for them to learn themselves, such as the proper use of firearms, building of forges and ironmongering, and even the techniques of political administration. The Spaniards were greatly perturbed when a mestizo powder-maker went over to the other side. With volcanic sulphur, saltpetre, and charcoal in abundance, the Indians could make deadly use of the large stores of field pieces and firearms which they had captured. As luck would have it, the deserter repented and returned to the Spanish fold, whereupon he was forgiven and permitted to return to Peru. There were also clerical renegades who apostatized and urged the Indians on in their own religious beliefs and practices.[16]

It is most important to understand that the motive for Araucanian observation of Spanish cultural forms was not to emulate them and thereby raise the level of their own, but to discover Spanish weaknesses and to mobilize Araucanian strength for forceful opposition. A fundamental weakness of Spanish occupation was its dire need of peace. Exploitation of this weakness became a cornerstone of Araucanian strategy throughout the sixteenth century and beyond. Spanish forces, both civilian and military, were too few and too widely dispersed, and the line of supply from Peru was much too long. Effective occupation and permanent settlement depended upon a guaranteed supply of Indian labor. This, of course, was in turn dependent upon total pacification, which would allow the colonists to concentrate on development of mining and agriculture rather than military defense. As experience in Mexico and Peru had shown, a mere handful of soldiers,

14 Encina, vol. 2, p. 306.

15 Nájera, p. 117.

16 *Idem*, pp. 117-122, 143-148, 69, 73-75. In spite of Spanish fears, firearms did not play a significant role in Indian strategy until late in the seventeenth century.